

# Middle Beyond Extremes: Maitreya's Madhyantavibhaga With Commentaries By Khenpo Shenga And Ju Mipham



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*Middle Beyond Extremes* contains a translation of the Buddhist masterpiece *Distinguishing the Middle from Extremes*. This famed text, often referred to by its Sanskrit title, *Madhyantavibhaga*, is part of a collection known as the Five Maitreya Teachings. Maitreya, the Buddha's regent, is held to have entrusted these profound and vast instructions to the master Asanga in the heavenly realm of Tushita.

In pithy verses, *Distinguishing the Middle from Extremes* employs the principle of the three natures to explain the way things seem to be, as well as the way they actually are. Unraveling the subtle processes that condition our thinking and experience, Maitreya's teaching reveals a powerful path of compassionate vision and spiritual transformation. *Distinguishing the Middle from Extremes* is here presented alongside commentaries by two outstanding masters of Tibet's nonsectarian Rimé movement: Khenpo Shenga and Ju Mipham. Maitreya and Asanga, who lived during the fourth century C.E., are the progenitors of the Approach of Vast Activity, one of two great currents of Mahayana view and practice. Their works have achieved the status of unique spiritual classics.

Maitreya describes the multifaceted interdependent processes whereby consciousness manifests and expresses itself. When on this path of experience we equally acknowledge the expressions of mind and their intrinsic nature, we will, he promises, discover a flawless and bountiful perspective—a discovery of unlimited resources. Maitreya's terse instructions are accompanied here by two commentaries.

The first, by Khenpo Shenga (1871–1927), intersperses glosses and explanatory remarks between the words of the root text. Unique to Shenga's approach is that he literally never adds a word of his own—all of his comments are extracted verbatim from the classical commentary of Vasubandhu. The second commentary, by Ju Mipham (1846–1912), seeks to explain and provide clear solutions by taking up the issues set forth in the verses and offering his understanding of them.

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